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CONAN THE KING
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THEY SAY THE KING'S GONE MAD...

Stan Lee PRESENTS

SHADOWS!

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...MAD O'YE HEAR?

AYE, LOST HIS WITS OVER THE DEATH OF HIS SON, SLAUGHTERED LIKE A WEAK-KNEED CALF UP IN SHADOWY GUNDERLAND.

AND NOW DAWNS THE DAY OF HIS *FUNERAL*, POOR PRINCE CONN.

SURE, AND THE KING'LL BE IN A GREAT MELANCHOLY...

MELANCHOLY INDEED THE MONARCH ON HIS THRONE...

...*MELANCHOLY* THE MEMORY OF A JOURNEY MADE BUT THREE WEEKS GONE--

LOOK HOW FEVERISHLY THE KING RIDES OFF TO RECOVER THE BODIES OF THE PRINCE AND AQUILONIA'S NOBLEST SOLDIERY...

...ALL FALLEN TO THE DARK ASSASSIN'S BLADES.

BA-RUMM

BAA-RUMM

HOW MY EARS RING!

THE DIN OF THIS GRIM PARADE OF LEGIONNAIRES COULD DROWN A THUNDERCLAP ROLLING ACROSS THE HEAVENS!

FIRST WE TRACK THE LAD TO WHERE HE'S SLAIN.

THEN, BY CROM'S IRON GUT, I SWEAR I'LL DRINK THE *HOT GORE* OF HIS MURDERERS!

GADUP

GADUP

GADUP

WITHIN SEVERAL DAYS...

THE PRINCE'S PARTY SHOULD HAVE PASSED THIS WAY, MY LIEGE.

HO, GUNDERMAN-- A WORD!

IN MITRA'S NAME, ASK AND I'LL ANSWER, SOLDIER!

THE PRINCE OF AQUILONIA AND A ROYAL TRAIN--DID THEY TRAVEL THIS ROUTE A FORTNIGHT PAST?

TRUTH TO TELL, THERE'S SUCH TRAFFIC ALWAYS CLATTERING ACROSS THESE COBBLESTONES 'TWOULD BE HARD TO RECOLLECT. NOW LET ME SEE--

DAMN YOU, DOG! YOU'D BEST TAX YOUR MEMORY OR I'LL SKEWER YOU LIKE A ROAST BOAR.

BY YOUR LEAVE, KING CONAN--

K-K-KING CONAN?!

--DISCRETION SUGGESTS THAT WE NOT...UM...ILL-USE A FREE CITIZEN OF AQUILONIA... IF I MAY SO ADVISE, MY LIEGE.

WHAK!

YOU MAY NOT, CAPTAIN!

WAUMP!

NOW TALK, YOU SCRAWNY SON OF A SHE-HOUND!

P...PRITHEE, FORGIVE ME, SIRE. I DID NOT KNOW--

THE PRINCE, DOG--THE PRINCE!

MITRA STRIKE ME BLIND IF I SPEAK FALSELY--

--PERHAPS THE PRINCE...I MEAN...SOLDIERS RIDE THROUGH HERE DAILY, YOUR LORDSHIP--

HANG YOU, CRINGING CUR!

BAH! DOES HE THINK WE GUNDERMEN ARE TO BE TREATED LIKE SERFS IN BONDAGE?

METHINKS THE KING GOES MAD WITH HIS GRIEF FOR THE SLAIN PRINCE.

FINALLY...

BLAST IT! NOTHING!

WE'VE TURNED EVERY STONE, BEATEN EVERY LAST BUSH FROM HERE TO THE BOSSONIAN MARSHES--

--AND NOT A SOLITARY SIGN OF THE AMBUSH!

MY LIEGE, THE ONE SOLDIER WHO SURVIVED THE ATTACK FELL UNCONSCIOUS BACK IN THE PALACE AT TARANTIA...

... BEFORE HE COULD YIELD US ANY DETAILS AS TO THE SLAIN PRINCE'S WHEREABOUTS.

I FEAR WE CHASE SHADOWS, MILORD.

DAMN THE DAY I SENT THE LAD OFF ON HIS OWN!

A SORRY THOUGHT, BUT BY NOW THE WOLVES AND RAVENS SURELY HAVE PICKED CLEAN THE BONES OF OUR LOST MEN!

CONN, MY SON, I SWEAR TO YOU!

--I SWEAR REVENGE ON THE FIENDS THAT SPILLED YOUR BLOOD!

I'LL CARVE THEIR RIBS--

--FOR FIRE-WOOD!

KRATCH

BUT FIRST, WE MUST HIE HOMEWARDS FOR THE FUNERAL.

HO! THERE'S A SUDDEN CHILL OF DEATH--

CONAN!

WHAT WITCHERY?!

THE SALT MARSHES HOLD ANSWERS TO YOUR SECRET RIDDLES, KING OF AQUILONIA...

...THE SALT MARSHES...

MY LORD, I BESEECH YOU--- THE MARSHES LIE A WAYS FROM HERE, AND WE CAN NO LONGER DELAY OUR RETURN TO THE COURT.

FOR BY CUSTOM, THE PRINCE'S FUNERAL MUST BE HELD BEFORE THE MOON IS FULL...

...THOUGH SINCE WE'VE FAILED TO FIND HIS MORTAL REMAINS AN EFFIGY OF STONE WILL BE BORNE IN PROCESSION.

FAILED... AYE.

THERE'S NAUGHT MORE DREADFUL TO FEAR FROM WITCHCRAFT NOW THAT THE PRINCE IS DEAD.

THE MARSHES WILL STILL BE THERE AFTER THE FUNERAL.

MELANCHOLY THE MONARCH ON HIS RETURN...

...MELANCHOLY NOW IN THE SHADOWS OF HIS THRONE ROOM...

AT THAT MOMENT, A CABIN WITHIN THE ROYAL CASTLE BAILEY...

SMASH

CRASH

FIE AND A POX ON YOUR EYES, TOMAS DENOIR, YOU LAZY, OAFISH, WORTHLESS SON OF A SHE-DEVIL.

FUMP

THE WATCHMAN SOUNDED THE DAWN TRUMPET AN HOUR GONE, YOU DEAF IDIOT! WOULD YOU LOSE US EVEN THE BARE PITTANCE YOU BRING HOME FROM COURT, YOU PENNILESS TOAD?!

WELL, WELL -- STOP GAPING LIKE A COW, YOU IMBECILE!

YES, YES, STOP GAPING... I WILL, VIXA...

NOW MOVE OR I'LL BLISTER YOU ALL OVER YOUR BOTTOM, YOU BAG OF BONES!

MOVE!

WHAP!

OOPH!

THUD!

AND YOU'D BEST REMEMBER TO ASK THE KING FOR AN IN-CREASE IN YOUR WINE STEWARD'S WAGES--

--OR YOU CAN MAKE YOUR BED IN THE DRAFTY YARD WITH THE PIGS, TONIGHT.

SLAM!

WITCH.

CONN...

YOUR HIGHNESS...

WHO DARES--?!

YOUR GOBLET, MAJESTY--?

HOW DARE YOU ENTER UNSUMMONED?!

SMACK!

BUT... BUT, MY LIEGE... I COME EVERY DAY AT THIS HOUR...

BEGONE, YOU WHIMPERING DOG, BEFORE I BID THE ROYAL AXEMAN MOUNT YOUR SNIVELING CUR'S HEAD ON THE COURTYARD GATES!

YES YES, SIRE.

MITRA AFTER THESE MANY YEARS OF FAITHFUL DUTY, MYSELF AND MY FATHER BEFORE ME, IT'S **WRONG** TO BE TREATED SO.

AND WHAT WILL YIXA SAY? ALAS I FEAR SHE'LL BOX ME ABOUT THE EARS AGAIN.

IT'S **WRONG**. I SAY. THE COURT USED TO BE A HAVEN FROM MY WIFE'S ILL-TEMPER AND VIPER'S TONGUE.

... BUT NOW THE KING ACTS LIKE A MADMAN IN HER STEAD.

IT'S WRONG, AYE, IT'S A DOWNRIGHT INSULT--TO MANHANDLE A STEWARD LIKE THAT, ONLY DOING MY DUTY

NAY I'LL HAVE JUSTICE--

STAY KEEPER OF THE CUPS! BY MY MORTAL EYES, I KNEW I'D FIND YOU HERE, KING'S MORNING GOBLET AND ALL

COUNCILOR PUBLIUS.

WE'LL NEED A GOLDEN DECANTER AND BEAKER FOR THIS AFTERNOON'S FUNERAL. AND RED WINE.

HIS MAJESTY SIMPLY *INSISTS* ON THE RITUAL FROM HIS BABAROUS HOMELAND OF *CIMMERIA.*

AND CAUSING A BLESSED STIR HE IS, MITRA FORGIVE HIM.

NOW IT'S OFF TO THE *COUNCIL OF BARONS.* THE KINGDOM'S NEAR CHAOS SINCE THE PRINCE'S DEATH.

AH, MORTAL ME, WHAT *BURDENS* THE *CHIEF COUNCILOR* MUST BEAR UPON HIS SHOULDERS

REMEMBER THE *WINE,* SIR.

THE KING'S *WINE*--

AYE, I'LL HAVE JUSTICE AND REVENGE THIS DAY.

I DEMAND THE FLOOR FOR THE PROVINCE OF MANARA!

STAY YOUR STORM OF GRIEVANCES, NOBLEMEN!

WHAT'S HERE, *COUNT TROCERO?* THIS COUNCIL ROARS LIKE A THOUSAND GIBBERING DEVILS!

I PRAY YOU, *TRUST* ME

THE KING WILL MEET WITH US IN GOOD TIME, FELLOWS.

COME FOR A FORETASTE OF HELL AND REBELLION, EH PUBLIUS?

DEAR ME, *PROSPERO*, BUT THIS UNSETTLES MY MORTAL STOMACH

I'VE NOT SEEN THE COUNCIL IN SUCH AN UPROAR SINCE THE TYRANT *NUMEDIDES* SAT THE THRONE BEFORE CONAN.

ANSWER THEN TROCERO HOW LONG WILL THE KING CAST THE SHADOW OF HIS MOURNING ACROSS THE ENTIRE NATION?

THE *ECONOMY* GOES UNCHECKED, OUR *ALLIES* DOUBT OUR GOOD FAITH, WHILE OUR FOES QUESTION OUR MILITARY PREPAREDNESS

ALL'S TUMULT WHILE OUR MONARCH NURSES HIS PRIVATE GRIEFS

HEAR! HEAR!

LET NO ONE FORGET THAT CONAN RULES BY *OUR WILL* AND *CONSENT.*

THERE'LL BE NO BRANDISHING OF BLADES IN THESE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, *BARON AEMILIUS!*

DO YOU FORSAKE LOYALTY TO YOUR GOLDEN PROVINCE OF *POITAIN* THAT YOU MIGHT PARROT A MAD KING'S POLICIES TO US, TROCERO?

AND WHAT'S THIS WE HEAR OF DESECRATING MITRA'S HOLY CHAPEL WITH RITUALS OF THE BARBARIAN NORTH?!

WHEN WE'VE ALL FOUND OUR SEATS--

WELL--?

COUNCILOR PUBLIUS?

UM, 'TIS TRUE KING CONAN BELIEVES THAT THE PRINCE'S SOUL IS DOOMED TO WANDER CHEERLESSLY THE SHADOWS OF *PURGATORY*...

.. AND THUS THE KING WOULD RAISE PRAYERS TO CROM ON CONN'S BEHALF

THE COOL, DRY CELLARS BENEATH THE ROYAL PALACE..

BUT [redacted] HAS SENT THE PRIEST OF MITRA TO PERSUADE OUR SOVEREIGN THAT CONN HAS BECOME A BLESSED SAINT AND BASKS IN MITRA'S GLORY.

AND THEREFORE THE NAME OF CROM NEED NOT BE INVOKED

A GOLDEN DECANTER YOU'LL HAVE, KING CONAN.

NOT A SOUL ABOUT. GOOD.

NOW...

...NAY I CANNOT GO ON WITH IT

--BUT THEN, AFTER THESE LONG YEARS OF HONEST DUTY SHALL I BE KICKED IN THE RIBS LIKE A STRAY DOG OUTSIDE THE PALACE GATES?

NAY, TOMAS DENOIR-- WHERE IS YOUR DIGNITY AND SELF-WORTH?

THERE.

SSSSSSSS

'TIS DONE.

. AND I AM RESOLVED TO IT

VENGEANCE ALONE WILL EASE THE STING OF THE MAD KING'S DISDAIN

. EVEN IF I BE AFTERWARDS FOUND OUT

THE TIME IS RIPE, THE KINGDOM'S IN CHAOS...

WHOSE SHADOWS -?

...AND NONE WILL SUSPECT A DOUBLE DOSE OF TRAGEDY--TO SLAY THE *FATHER* AT HIS OWN *SON'S* FUNERAL!

AS LEGIONNAIRES, WE'LL RIDE NEAR UPON THE KING

AND ONCE THE DEED'S DONE, WE'LL SLIP INTO THE THRONG

. THEN WAIT 'TIL OUR SQUADRON SEIZES THE REINS OF RULE IN THE ENSUING CONFUSION.

WHAT? SLAY THE KING AND STEAL MY REVENGE?

NEVER!

...VANCE NOR WE CONN'S BEDCHAMBER ABOVE

HOW YOU LOVED THESE WOODEN WARRIORS WHEN YOU WERE SMALL DEAR CONN--

ZENOBIA! IT WAS YOU WHO PUT THAT PIOUS OLD BALOPATE UP TO PREACHING AT ME WASN'T IT?

WELL PRIEST OF MITRA OR NO I'LL INVOKE THE GOD OF MY BARBARIC FATHERS AT MY SON'S GRAVE!

HOW CONN'S DEATH HAS CAST A SHADOW BETWEEN US CONAN

DO WHAT YOU WILL THEN MY STUBBORN HUSBAND MY PLEADING ONLY FALLS ON DEAF EARS

I NEEDED YOU *NOW* IN MY *GRIEF* FAR MORE THAN EVER IN THE *PAST* WHEN YOU RESCUED ME FROM THE WRECK OF SORCERERS AND DEMONS

BUT WILLFUL WILLFUL CONAN

YOU RODE OFF NONETHELESS AS THOUGH *YOU* WERE THE ONLY WARRIOR IN ALL OF HYBORIA'S REALMS.

AS YOU WHEN I *BEGGED* THAT YOU *NOT* JOIN THE SEARCH FOR THE FALLEN PRINCE IN OUTLAND*

* LAST ISSUE.

AND YOU LEFT ME TO MOURN ALONE

THE BLOOD OF MY FATHERS RAN DEEP IN CONN'S VEINS DESPITE YOUR ATTEMPTS TO MAKE HIM A *PRETTY PRINCE* OF CIVILIZATION

HIS FUNERAL WILL BE THAT OF A *WARRIOR* AND A *MAN!*

MY APOLOGIES, YOUR MAJESTIES.

BUT *AYELET*, QUEEN OF TEL-AMYON N'SHEM COMES TO PAY HER LAST RESPECTS TO OUR LAMENTED PRINCE

CONAN, I'VE NOT FORGOTTEN HOW YOU RODE UNSELFISHLY FROM YOUR KINGDOM.

LEFT BEHIND YOUR FAMILY AND COMFORT, AND FOUGHT AT MY SIDE TO WIN ME MY RIGHTFUL CROWN *

*KING CONAN #17--OWZ.

YOU DO NOT DESERVE SUCH SORROWS, DEAREST KING

KRUNCH

MY SINCEREST CONDOLENCES, ZENOBIA.

MY SINCEREST THANKS, O QUEEN

AYE, MY LORD, I DO FEAR THE OCCASION OF SUPREME SADNESS DRAWS UPON US.

SHALL SEND THE FUNERAL PAGES TO ATTEND YOU PRESENTLY.

COUNCILOR PUBLIUS, IS ALL NOW IN READINESS?

COUNCILOR! COUNCILOR PUBLIUS!

WELL, WELL, WHAT IS IT? TIME FLIES THIS DAY LIKE A BAT ON FOUR WINGS

COUNCILOR, THE WINE S PREPARED IN THE ROYAL CHAPEL--

--BUT IN THE SHADOWS OF THE CELLAR I OVERHEARD PLOTTING TO SLAY THE K NG--!

WHAT?!

MY MORTAL HEART! *PROSPERO* AND *TROCERO* MUST BE FOREWARNED!

AYE, FOR THE KING MUST LIVE [illegible] CUP TO HIS LIPS

MEANWHILE, IN A [illegible]

TAURUS! STOP THAT! FATHER WILL TAKE THE LEATHER STRAP TO YOU IF HE SEES.

HE SEARCHES THE PALACE FOR YOU. THE FUNERAL PROCESS ON IS ABOUT TO BEGIN

ZIZOT

BEHOLD SISTER RADEGUND

...'TIS A MYSTIC CRYSTAL THAT I TRADED ANOTHER OF MOTHER'S SILLY BAUBLES FOR.

THE OLD SOOTHSAYING CRONE I BOUGHT IT FROM TOLD ME I COULD, WITH PRACTICE WIELD GREAT POWER

DO YOU THINK I, FOR ONE MOMENT MISS CONN?

NOW THAT HE'S GONE, IT MAKES ME CROWN PRINCE

AND I SHALL DO AS I PLEASE

TAURUS!!

I'VE FOUND HIM FATHER

WE ARE READY

WELL?! MOVE, BLAST YOU!

MUST YOU EVEN NOW BE AN IDLING, LAZY WHELP?!

YOU ARE NO CIMMERIAN.

YOU ARE NOT MY SON.

NOT LIKE CONN

THE SHADOW OF DEATH HAS FALLEN OVER AQUILONIA.

THOUSANDS THRONG THE ROUTE OF THE FUNERAL CORTEGE THROUGH THE CAPITAL CITY OF TARANTIA...

'TIS LIKELY TO BE THE MEN OF CAECUS'S SQUADRON IF THE STEWARD'S WORD BE CREDIBLE

DENOIR'S AN HONEST SERVANT OF THE COURT FOR A SCORE OF WINTERS, PROSPERO.

MARK THOSE TWO MOUNTED KNAVES.

NOW!

QUICKLY AND QUIETLY, PROSPERO!

FHWIK HWIT!

TUMP BTUMP

THUS QUICKLY AND QUIETLY

PALLANTIDES WILL ROUND UP THE LESS BOLD CONSPIRATORS

HERE'S THE TEMPLE OF MITRA

AT THAT MOMENT V THE CASTLE BAILEY

WHAT'S DONE IS DONE BUT WHERE AM I LEFT?

AT VIXA'S MERCY FOR RETURNING PENNILESS. SHE'LL THRASH ME, AYE.

AND WHAT OF THE ROYAL GUARD? WILL THEY NOT SEEK ME OUT FOR MURDER WHEN THE KING FALLS?

HE IS A LIAR INDEED WHO AVOWS THAT REVENGE IS SWEET.

BEST TO END IT ALL HERE WITH A DRAUGHT OF MY OWN POISON

WHAT?!

HOME MIDAFTERNOON YOU MISERABLE SLOUCH!

I BREAK MY BACK IN THE FIELDS ALL MORNING TO FIND YOU IDLING ABOUT LIKE A DRUNKARD AT HIS CUPS!

I'LL HAVE THAT!

MY THROAT'S LIKE CHALK FROM THE NOON HEAT!

PHTUEEN!

GAK

KUNK

VIXA?

SHE'S SHE'S DEAD.

DEAD AND GONE

HA! VIXA YOU'LL NOT LIFT YOUR BROOM TO ME AGAIN

I'M A *FREE* MAN!

BUT.. BUT THE KING'S CUP-- I'LL BE *CAUGHT* AND *HANGED* UNLESS--!

THE INNER CHAPEL OF THE TEMPLE.

FOR *MITRA* IS ABOVE US AND ABOUT US AND EVER ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS.

AND NOW OUR BELOVED PRINCE RESIDES AT HIS RIGHT HAND, CHIEF AMONG HIS SAINTS, A STAR MOST BRIGHT IN OUR LORD'S HEAVENLY HOST.

NOW.. IF YOU *MUST*... PROCEED, KING CONAN.

THE WINE

THE WINE! WHAT HAVE I DONE? MITRA, I PRAY I'M NOT TOO LATE--

LET ME THROUGH THERE! LET ME THROUGH!

THE KING MUST NOT DRINK FROM THE GOLDEN FLASK--!

CONN D'ED A MAN.

'N THE NAME OF CROM I DRINK--

--TO MY SON'S GHOST WANDERING IN THE SHADOW HALLS OF THE DEAD.

THE WINE!

AAHHHHHHH

A PHYSICIAN

THAT NIGHT IN THE PALACE

AYE COUNCILOR PUBLIUS WHEN I I UH FOUND MY POOR WIFE STONE DEAD WINE FROM THE GAMS CASK ON HER LIPS, I REALIZED THAT...

.. SOMEONE MUST HAVE ENTERED THE STOREROOM BEFORE I FILLED THE FLASK. BUT THE KING--?

AND *YOU*, SIR, YOUR FAITHFULNESS TO THE KING RECOMMENDS YOU FOR A PROMOTION

THOUGH 'TWILL BE BUT A LITTLE REWARD FOR A BRAVE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD. I'M CERTAIN

IT SEEMS THE CONSPIRATORS TOOK NO CHANCES AFTERWARD. THEY MANAGED TO POISON THE WINE IN THE EVENT THE ARMED ASSASSINS WERE CUT DOWN, AS MITRA BE BLESSED, THEY WERE

THE ROYAL PHYSICIAN SWEARS HE'S NEVER SEEN SO HARDY A CONSTITUTION AS CONAN'S--TO HAVE *SURVIVED* UNTIL THE ANTIDOTE ARRIVED.

PUBLIUS

COME, COME, YOU MUST REST, YOUR MAJESTY, BY ORDERS OF THE ROYAL PHYSICIANS.

--A *FORTNIGHT* CONFINED TO BED AT THE LEAST

BUT THERE IS .. A WITCH SPOKE .. THE SALT MARSHES...

PUBLIUS... IF I CANNOT GO THEN...

.. SEND IN THE *BLACK DRAGONS!!*

ALAN ZELENETZ
SCRIPT
MARC SILVESTRI
DAVE SIMONS
FINISHES
RICK PARKER
LETTERS
GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORS
JIM OWSLEY
EDITOR
LARRY HAMA
SENIOR EDITOR

On a diplomatic mission for his father, Conan The King, young Prince Conn and his party were ambushed by a mysterious band of murderous attackers. Though Conn was only wounded, the would-be assassins believed him dead and, after first stripping him of his royal signet ring, left him stranded deep in the deadly Woods of Gunderland. Here, several days after the ambush, the young Prince finds himself set upon by a pack of ravenous wild wolves...

By Alan Zelenetz and Marc Silvestri

Stan Lee PRESENTS:

CONAN

SON OF THE BARBARIAN KING

AAAAAaaaaaaa

WOOF WOOF

WOOF WAUF

WAUF WAUF WHOOF

LETTERED BY RICHARD PARKER

COLORED BY GEORGE ROUSSOS

EDITED BY JIM OWSLEY

WOOOF
RWOOOF
WOOOF

WWWOOO

HAVE TO RUN MUSTN'T

STOP--!

COME EMBRACE ME PRINCE

FOR I AM YOUR DEATH!

HA HA HA

NO NO NO

CRUNCH

RRRR

GRRRR

PF

PF

PF

CAN'T GO-- :HUFF: ON ..

CAN'T - :HUFF: GO ON--

GROWRRRRR

RRRRR

NO!!

THUD

.. SLEEP.

THE *OTHER*--!

GRRRR

BRRRP

FATHER! HELP ME! I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

REMEMBER, CONN A TRUE CIMMERIAN KNOWS NO FEAR

I'M NOT AFRAID, FATHER

'TIS BETTER TO LOSE A RIGHT HAND THAN TO GO THROUGH LIFE A SNIVELLING COWARD.

AS MY FATHER TAUGHT ME.. AND HIS FATHER TAUGHT HIM..

BE STILL, OR *WRITHE* IN DISHONOR!

CHOCK

NOT A MUSCLE FLINCHED

THERE'S A TRUE SON OF CIMMERIA

FATHERRR!

RRRRRR

RR

AND 'TIS THE TO STOP RUNNING

AYE A TRUE CIMMERIAN KNOWS NO FEAR.

GRRRRRRRR!

HWWWIRP

BLAST!

GRRRRRRRRR

NOW!

WHUD!

CRAAK-U

THANK MITRA THAT'S...

...OVER--?

GRRRRRRRRRRRRR

NO! I THOUGHT THE FIRST BEAST HAD ROLLED TO IT'S DEATH--

I MUST ACT--

--AS FATHER WOULD.

GRRWWRRRWN

OOPH!

NO!

MUST--

NO!

NOW YOU'LL--

GRRRR

--KNOW--

AAAAOOOOOOOO

CHIKT

CHIKT

--MY RED RAGE--

DEVIL!

SKLIT!

HA! NOT ONLY HAVE WE AVOIDED THE HIGHWAY TAXES OF NEMEDIA BY TRAVELING ROUNDABOUT.

MITRA ... I'VE NEVER ... IT'S BLOOD ... SO HOT!

THUD!

...BUT IT SEEMS WE'VE WON OURSELVES A STRONG, VIGOROUS WHELP AS WELL.

MITRA'S LUCK! HE'LL GAIN US AS FULL A PURSE AS OUR BLONDE BRYTHUNIAN BEAUTIES ON THE SLAVE BLOCK.

SLAVERS!!

TO BE CONTINUED...

KING CONAN

℅ MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

JIM OWSLEY
EDITOR

Dear Marvel,

I loved the art and story for "Bones and a Blade." I look forward to more sea adventures in **CONAN THE KING**.

Rick Kopitzke
Cottage Grove, WI

Dear Jim,

Issue #19 of **KING CONAN** was really great and I think I, myself, am falling in love with Queen Zenobia, but whatever you do, please don't let Conan know . . .

Donavon R. Ice Jr.
Elizabethtown, PA

Dear **KING CONAN** Crew,

I recently finished reading issue #19, "Bones and a Blade," and felt compelled to comment. The plot was quite good, and the characters seemed to come alive in more than a one-dimensional sense (i.e. Zenobia and Nestor). Also, the art was superior, as usual.

Ed Brandt
Fairbanks, AZ

Dear Editor,

About your recent action-packed issue of **KING CONAN**: Nestor orders Caecus to go below with Zenobia and to shield her with his very life. The *"Pirate Creed of Ethics"* states:

"Ye captain shall have full command during time of engagement . . . he who disobeys him may be punished . . ."

A pirate almost never disobeys his captain. When Conan goes below there's no one there except Zenobia.

Take your time on this one.

Alex Walle
Temple Hills, MD

Uh . . . uh . . . uh . . .

Dear Jim & Larry:

Now we're getting somewhere! It's quite apparent, judging by the quality of the past few issues, that you guys definitely know what you're doing. Alan Zelenetz has a proper grip on his characters and really has the ability to breathe a certain life into them. Iron Bones was the best pirate character I've come across in any of the barbarian's magazines.

The surprise of the issue was Michael Kaluta's cover, a small masterwork in its own right. I hope we'll be seeing more little surprises in upcoming issues. **KING CONAN** seems to be undergoing a big change in direction.

John Howard Sherman
Croton-on-Hudson, NY

Big changes are definitely on the way, John, the first of which you're doubtlessly aware of by now: KING CONAN is now CONAN THE KING. In issues to come, look for more than a few surprises. Take nothing for granted, and rule nothing out. For instance, who said Conan only had *one* son . . .?

WHO IS GEOFF ISHERWOOD AND WHY IS HE PENCILING NEXT ISSUE?

A few years back, before I started working in the comics industry, I used to go down to my local newsdealer, just as most of you do, to buy the latest issue of my favorite comic. The **Stan Lee/John Romita Sr.** issues of **SPIDER-MAN** were my favorites. Although neither **Stan The Man** nor **Jazzy John** let me down by missing an issue (using a fill-in story or a reprint), there were other titles both at Marvel (which shall remain nameless), and at that other place which would on occasion, unfortunately, let me down. Can you imagine the despair of a bright-eyed (actually, four-eyed) youth like myself who, braving the elements and tempting certain death from his broom-wielding mother, made it all the way down to that mean old guy's store on the corner of Farmer's Boulevard and 114th Avenue, plunked down his hard-earned twelve cents, and made it all the way back home only to find that the latest issue of **POTATO MAN** was not done by **Lee** and **Kirby**, but by Gus Schackley and Irving Feldstein. Arrrgghhh. Now, Schackley and Feldstein could be, for all I know, a dynamite team (and, if they were working at Marvel, they would be), but because I was disappointed, I was already prejudiced against them, and without even giving them a break, assumed they stunked. Yeah, that's right, stunked. I'm an editor; I can use poor english if I want to.

New talent **Geoff Isherwood** is penciling next issue, and taking over the inking chores as of **CONAN THE KING #23.** Our regular penciler, **Marc Silvestri**, was slated for our "Black Dragons" story, but unfortunately we all fell quite a bit behind schedule while researching and developing last issue's "The Prince Is Dead," and Marvel Traffic Manager **Virginia Romita** (Ye Bearer Of The Yummy Brownies) told me if I didn't do something to get the book on the schedule, she'd club me to death with her schedule book. So, **Marc** is home in Chicago, desperately penciling away on "Ordeal," the followup to next issue, while at the same time **Geoff Isherwood**, himself ensconced firmly within the wilds of Montreal, is penciling and inking next issue's tale, "The Black Dragons."

I really didn't want to leave you in the lurch. I didn't want you to peel back **Michael Wm. Kaluta's** beautiful cover, say "THAT'S NOT MARC SILVESTRI!!!", and put the comic back. Really, **Geoff** is one heck of a fine artist in his own right, as you'll see if you get past the credit line and take a look. I think **Geoff's** going to be a major force in the future of this business, and I'm more than happy that he was available to help out a desperate editor in need.

Geoff Isherwood: "The Black Dragons." It's dynamite. Don't miss it.

Jim Owsley